

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15
USIA-06 AGRE-00 EB-08 COME-00 AID-05 IO-13 ACDA-07
TRSE-00 EA-07 EUR-12 /108 W
-----060133Z 071077 /63

R 051313Z APR 77

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2443
INFO AMCONSUL BOMBAY
AMCONSUL CALCUTTA
AMEMBASSY COLOMBO
AMEMBASSY DACCA
AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD
AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU
AMCONSUL MADRAS
USCINCPAC

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

EO 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, IN
SUBJ: PRIME MINISTER OUTLINES GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF
JANATA GOVERNMENT

SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER DESAI DELIVERED A TWENTY-MINUTE RADIO AND TV ADDRESS ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 4 TO OUTLINE HIS GOVERNMENT'S PLANS FOR THE FUTURE. HIS THEMES CLOSELY PARALLELED THOSE OF THE JANATA PARTY MANIFESTO (SEE NEW DELHI 2093) AND THE ACTING PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT (NEW DELHI 4388). HE EMPHASIZED THE NEED FOR DECENTRALIZING POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POWER, PLEDGED TO END DESTITUTION WITHIN A DECADE, PROMISED TO

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MAXIMISE EMPLOYMENT, AND REASSURED THE SOUTHERN STATES THAT THEY WOULD NOT BE OVERLOOKED BY HIS GOVERNMENT. ON FOREIGN POLICY, HE REITERATED HIS COMMITMENT TO "GENUINE NON-ALIGNMENT". DESAI'S SPEECH WAS A SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM MRS GANDHI'S PRACTICE, SINCE SHE NORMALLY ADDRESSED THE NATION ONLY TO MAKE SURPRISE ANNOUNCEMENTS. IN AN UNPRECEDENTED STEP, THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION

IS BEING GIVEN EQUAL TIME TO RESPOND TO THE PRIME MINISTER'S
REMARKS. END SUMMARY.

1. SPEAKING IN A SOFT AND SLOW VOICE, DESAI MADE THE
FOLLOWING POINTS:

(A) REFERRING TO HIMSELF AS THE "HUMBLE CUSTODIAN"
OF THE PEOPLE'S TRUST AND ALUDING TO THE LIFTING OF
"CLOUDS OF FEAR AND DISTRUST", HE THANKED THE PEOPLE FOR
PUTTING THEIR FAITH IN THE JANATA GOVERNMENT UNDER VERY
DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES.

(B) HE CHARACTERIZED HIGHLY CENTRALIZED GOVERNMENTS
AS A MENACE TO DEMOCRACY AND PROMISED TO END DESTITUTION
WITHIN TEN YEARS THROUGH THE DEVOLUTION AND DECENTRALI-
ZATION OF POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC POWER.

(C) POINTING OUT THAT INDIA REMAINS A PREDOMINANTLY
VILLAGE-ORIENTED SOCIETY, DESAI UNDERLINED THE IMPORTANCE
OF IMPROVING THE LOT OF RURAL PEOPLE AND OF REVERSING THE
FLOW OF VILLAGERS TO THE CITIES IN SEARCH OF EMPLOYMENT.
WHILE AGREEING THAT LARGE INDUSTRY HAS A ROLE IN THE
ECONOMY HE CITED THE NEED FOR SMALL-SCALE ENTERPRISES AND
URGED THE APPLICATION OF "APPROPRIATE TECHNOLOGY".

(D) THE PM REAFFIRMED THE RIGHT TO WORK AND PROMISED
THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD RESTRUCTURE ECONOMIC PROGRAMS
AND PRIORITIES IN ORDER TO MAXIMIZE EMPLOYMENT.

(E) CALLING FOR AN EGALITARIAN RATHER THAN EXPLOITIVE
SOCIETY, HE URGED AN END TO THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN
RURAL AND URBAN AREAS.

(F) THE PM PRAISED THE PEOPLE FOR REFUSING "TO
BEND THEIR KNEES BEFORE INSOLENT MIGHT" DURING "THE DARKEST
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HOURS" OF THE EMERGENCY AND URGED THEM TO REBUILD THE
COUNTRY'S INSTITUTIONS ON THIS TRADITION OF FREEDOM AND
TO "ENSURE THAT THEY WERE NEVER AGAIN QUITE SO VULNERABLE
TO SUBVERSION FOR PARTISAN ENDS".

(G) CITING THE NEED FOR CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS TO
RESTORE THE CIVIL RIGHTS WHICH HAD BEEN ECLIPSED DURING
THE EMERGENCY, HE PLEDGED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD MOVE
SWIFTLY TO FREE THE MEDIA AND SAFEGUARD JUDICIAL INDE-
PENDENCE. AT THE SAME TIME, PEOPLE MUST RESPECT THE RULE
OF LAW AND REFRAIN FROM RESORTING TO VIOLENCE. THE PM
PLEDGED TO CREATE AUTONOMOUS MACHINERY TO INVESTIGATE
CHARGES OF CORRUPTION AND MISUSE OF OFFICE AT ALL LEVELS
OF THE GOVERNMENT.

(H) IN A REFERENCE TO THE FACT THAT THE NEW GOVERN-
MENT'S MAJORITY IS BASED ALMOST EXCLUSIVELY IN THE NORTH-
ERN AND CENTRAL STATES, THE PM REASSURED THE PEOPLE OF
THE SOUTHERN STATES THAT HE WOULD NOT OVERLOOK THEIR
INTERESTS BECAUSE HIS WAS A NATIONAL GOVERNMENT AND "NO
REGION OR SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION HAS REASON TO FEEL

ORPHANED". HE ALSO SAID THAT HIS GOVERNMENT DID NOT INTEND TO SECURE DEFECTS OR TOPPLE ADMINISTRATIONS IN STATES CONTROLLED BY OTHER PARTIES.

2. DESAI BRIEFLY TOUCHED UPON FOREIGN AFFAIRS, SAYING THAT THE ONLY PATH TO PEACE IS "GENUINE NON-ALIGNMENT, WITHOUT FEAR OR FAVOR, AFFECTION OR ILLWILL." HE "PASSIONATELY" BELIEVED IN PEACE AS "THE ONLY EFFECTIVE MEANS OF SALVATION FOR ALL OF US WHO INHABIT THIS PLANET". THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF HIS FOREIGN POLICY WILL BE NON-ALIGNMENT AND THE "COLLECTIVE COOPERATIVE EFFORTS FOR THE SOLUTION OF ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PROBLEMS THE WORLD OVER". HIS GOVERNMENT INTENDS TO FOLLOW THIS PATH "IN A SPIRIT OF COMRADESHIP AND FELLOWSHIP WITH THE REST OF THE WORLD...WITHOUT ANY MENTAL RESERVATIONS". DESAI CONCLUDED: "IN THE WORLD OF TOMORROW INCREASINGLY ECONOMICS AND HUMAN RELATIONSHIPS WILL DISPLACE POLITICS

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IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONSHIPS. WE CAN PLAY OUR DUE ROLE IN THAT DEVELOPMENT ONLY IF WE ARE ECONOMICALLY STRONG OURSELVES."

3. COMMENT: THE PM'S SPEECH OFFERED NO NEW DEPARTURES FROM THE GENERAL THEMES EXPRESSED IN THE JANATA MANIFESTO, DURING THE CAMPAIGN AND MOST RECENTLY IN THE ACTING PRESIDENT'S ADDRESS TO PARLIAMENT. HE PLACED STRONG EMPHASIS ON THE NEED TO RETURN TO GANDHIAN VALUES. ALTHOUGH RESTRAINED IN HIS REMARKS ON THE PREVIOUS ADMINISTRATION, DESAI MADE CLEAR THAT CHARGES OF CORRUPTION WILL BE INVESTIGATED. HIS ADDRESS WAS ALMOST IN THE NATURE OF A FRIENDLY CHAT WITH HIS COUNTRYMEN TO SKETCH OUT THE GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF THE GOVERNMENT IN WHICH THEY HAD PLACED THEIR TRUST. THE SPEECH WAS A SIGNIFICANT DEPARTURE FROM PRIOR PRACTICE IN TWO RESPECTS: MRS. GANDHI HAD INFREQUENTLY USED THE MEDIA OF RADIO AND TV, AND THEN USUALLY TO MAKE DRAMATIC ANNOUNCEMENTS SUCH AS THE DECLARATION OF THE EMERGENCY AND THE CALLING OF ELECTIONS. JUDGING FROM HIS SHORT INITIAL PERIOD IN OFFICE SO FAR, DESAI MAY BE MORE ANXIOUS TO USE SUCH PLATFORMS AS THE TELEVISED ADDRESS AND OPEN PRESS CONFERENCES TO POPULARIZE HIS NEW GOVERNMENT AND AT THE SAME TIME TO FULFILL HIS PLEDGE TO UNSHACKLE INDIA'S MEDIA. IN ADDITION, FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE LEADER OF THE OPPOSITION WILL BE GIVEN EQUAL TIME ON RADIO AND TV TO REPLY TO THE PM'S STATEMENT. CONGRESS PARLIAMENTARY PARTY LEADER Y.B. CHAVAN IS SCHEDULED TO MAKE HIS ADDRESS TO THE NATION ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 5.

SCHNEIDER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptoning: X
Capture Date: 01-Jan-1994 12:00:00 am
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT REFORM, PRESS CONFERENCES
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Sent Date: 05-Apr-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 01-Jan-1960 12:00:00 am
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
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Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
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Executive Order: N/A
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Expiration:
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Format: TEL
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
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Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2893997
Secure: OPEN
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Subject: PRIME MINISTER OUTLINES GUIDING PRINCIPLES OF JANATA GOVERNMENT SUMMARY: PRIME MINISTER DESAI DELIVERED A TWENTY-
TAGS: PINT, IN, JANATA PARTY, (DESAI, MORARJI)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvgwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/271befa9-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
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